1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

arrangement. Thus Taraivosa got the land of her father, Mburua of Natokatoka, for her son; Mburua on his death had given it to one Tokai of Vatuwangga; when Tokai died it passed to Rasolo, also of Vatuwangga, who was "brother" to Tokai; Taraivosa begged the land for her son, and Rasolo promised to give it as soon as her son began to pay taxes.

A man gets land through his mother; if he comes to live with his mother's people.

Though in some cases it looks at first sight as though land had passed out of the clan, this does not actually happen. Thus Joshua and his people lived on land which his father had begged from Lemaki, the hereditary carpenter; but Lemaki holds land from the nobles only so long as he lives in Lakemba. Tiope of the clan of Ndaulakemba in Levuka held the land of Osea of the clan of Manukuira, because they had lived together, and Tiope was working off Osea's debts; nevertheless the land was spoken of as belonging to Osea's son, a boy of about thirteen.

If a member of the clan dies without issue his land reverts to his "edge of the oven." Ratu Finau however had all the edges of the oven put down as one in the Lands Enquiry so that now the land reverts to Katumbalevu as a whole.

It was definitely laid down that land could not go out of the clan except as *wa ni kuna*, the strangling rope, *ka ni mbula*, the price of life, or as *i thovithovi ni ndraundrau*, the wherewithal to pluck leaves for plates. The strangling rope is land given to kinsmen of a deceased nobleman's wife for strangling her at his death. The price of life is land given by a man to one who has saved his life. The wherewithal to pluck leaves is land given away as a woman's dowry; the land is supposed to keep her supplied with banana and breadfruit leaves on which to place the food. Such land is also called *i kaukau ni alewa* (that which is brought with a woman).

It was indeed said that a lady marrying a "small man" would also bring a dowry, and I know of one such case where the father of a lady of Naivi gave some land when she married a man of Levuka; the land is now held by the man's son. But this does not appear to be a common practice, for I was told that the reason why a lady does not bring land to the "landsmen" is that her people have no land to give. The Chief of Nasangalau says the same of his village: the nobles there had no land but what they got from other clans through their mothers.

A nobleman will sometimes perform what is called *vakalutulutu*, causing to fall; this is a present of manufactured articles to his son's maternal uncles, in order to "make the land fall"—that is, to get land for his son. Meli, the head of Naivi, thus got land from his mother's clan, Tumbou;

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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881 The patients were confined for about a week in either the tattoo house or their parents' homes under the care of the tattoo specialist. Food was provided for them by their parents.
304 They were not allowed to bathe in the sea, to leave their houses except in case of necessity, or to be seen by men.

When the design (*nggia* or *sothondra*) which covered the girl's thighs was completed, it resembled a pair of black shorts. It was hidden by the girl's skirt of hibiscus bark (*liku*). After the thighs had been tattooed a design (*samunggawe*) was tattooed on the back of the fingers between the knuckle and the first joint. Then a design (*tawelu*) consisting of a half-moon filled in solidly with black was tattooed on each corner of the mouth. The designs on the fingers and the mouth showed that the girl was nubile.

[424 531] Each specialist had her own designs, which resembled designs seen today on barkcloth. The designs for a chief's daughter and those for other girls differed, but no one knew what the difference was.

When the entire process was finished a feast (*kanakana vutu ni nggia*) was held. The girls bathed in the sea for the first time after the final operation and their bodies were oiled and clothed in barkcloth. They were usually married soon after this ceremony.

[177] Informants believed that tattooing was introduced into Lau by immigrants who came from Viti Levu and founded the chiefs' phratry in Lau. This would identify the tattooing complex with the high Fijian culture of eastern Fiji (p. 215). According to Roth (20), tattooing is still practiced surreptitiously in the provinces of Ra on Viti Levu and Mathuata on Vanua Levu. Its survival in these provinces, which are strongholds of the high Fijian culture, substantiates the above hypothesis. (See also Brewster, 1, pp. 185-186.)

Today, some boys and girls have their names tattooed on their arms by anyone who has learned to write. This is done with a needle and any dye. Names are often misspelled and letters inverted.

BETROTHAL

584 Child betrothal (*watchi ni suthu*) is common in Lau. The boy's father arranges his betrothal to his female cross cousin, the preferred mate, some time before he reaches the age of seven or eight. Having chosen a mate for his son, the father discusses the matter with the elders of his clan. If the match is approved, he collects a whale's tooth, mats, tapa, and other property from his relatives. Several male members of the clan present the formal proposal (*lakovakina*) accompanied by the property (*i lakovaki ni tchikina*). After considering the matter the girl's clan sends a representative with the [177] answer to the boy's clan. In recent times the proposal and the answer are occasionally written in pencil on imported paper. If the proposal is refused the property is returned. If it is accepted the two children are called *watchi* (spouse) and gifts of food and property are made at intervals by the boy's father to the girl's father. When the children reach the age of seven or eight they are informed of the arrangement.

● [583] Child betrothal is not binding, but natives say that most child betrothals are consummated in marriage. If either the boy or the girl does not care to

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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marry his betrothed he may break the engagement (*vakandaroivola*). This necessitates the formal return of the property (*i lakovaki ni tchikina*) presented by the boy's clan to the girl's clan at the betrothal ceremony, or its equivalent. However, the food and property, of considerable value, which the girl's relatives have received from the boy's relatives from time to time are not returned with the original gift. 584

Frequently a man is reluctant to marry his childhood betrothed for, just as the tabu on a man's classificatory sisters (*weka*) tends to stimulate his sexual interest in them, so the accessibility of his cross cousins (*watchi*), especially his betrothed, tends to make them less desirable. However, he is loathe to break his engagement, for he knows that if he does so his father will be very angry at the loss of so much property. Hence a young man postpones his marriage as long as possible.

When he is between eighteen and twenty-five, his father and his clan, whose interests lie in the preservation of the sacred clan mana, force him to take decisive steps toward marriage. He either marries his childhood betrothed or breaks his engagement and finally becomes engaged to another girl. After he has talked to the girl (*veivosaki*) and gained her consent, he tells his father. If the elders of his clan approve of the match, the formal proposal (*lakovakina*) is made. When the elders of the girl's clan have approved the match, an engagement feast (*mangitchi ni vola*) is prepared and presented by the boy's relatives to those of the girl. When a match is not sanctioned by the clan elders, the young couple occasionally elope (*veitumbaitaki*) to the bush, where they stay until the anger of their relatives, especially of the boy's father, has abated. At first the couple is talked about in the village, but gossip soon dies away. When they return they are accepted as man and wife and a wedding feast may or may not be held. [582] [583]

MARRIAGE

Weddings in Lau differ greatly in size and importance. The quality and quantity of the feasts and gifts for the ceremonial affinal exchanges not only reflect but also determine the social status of the intermarrying clans, and there is much rivalry between them. However, in the long run, the boy's clan usually contributes the larger quantity of food and property (p. 95). The boy's clan sets the date for the ceremonies which are usually held in harvest season when food is abundant. 585

Preparations for the wedding rites are begun months ahead. The work is shared by the men of each of the intermarrying clans who are responsible for the marriage feasts and by the women, who provide the tapa and mats for the affinal exchanges of property.

I attended a wedding in Naivindamu, a small low ranking village of sailors

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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883 becomes rather pleasant. He is accepted as a man in the
581 community, but he avoids the full responsibility of an adult. Although he sleeps in a men's house he is still a member of his father's household, cultivates his father's lands, and contributes to the daily supply and preparation of food for his father's earth oven. He participates in the ceremonies and games of his age group, spears fish, and sails on trading expeditions. He is sought after by the young women of the community among whom, with the exception of the group tabu to him, he is free to make conquests. The more numerous his affairs the greater he is desired by women. If he should have a
[848] bastard or two, the girl's father will care for the child. When he marries, however, he must accept the responsibilities of an adult; found his own household, work his own garden, and support his family.

A girl, on the other hand, is eager to marry. She is interested in securing a good husband—one who is a dependable provider and a strong man, physically and mentally—for her well-being and her position in the community will depend on her husband. Moreover, she anticipates a more satisfactory sex life after marriage. Once betrothed, a girl rarely breaks an engagement, but waits until the young man is ready to marry.

584 By the time a young man is about 25 years old his father
583 and his clan, whose interests still lie in the preservation of the sacred clan "mana", exert pressure, forcing him to take decisive steps toward marriage. He either marries his childhood betrothed, who is between 18 and 25 years old, or he breaks with her and becomes engaged to another girl. After he has secured her consent he informs his father, and the matter is discussed by the elders of his clan. If they approve of the match a formal proposal is made. If the betrothal is sanctioned by the girl's clan an engagement feast is prepared and presented by the young man's clan to the girl's clan. On the other hand, if the match is not sanctioned, the couple

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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occasionally run away and live together in the bush. At the end of our stay in Tokalau, canoes arrived from Mothe to take a young woman of the village to Mothe to be married. In the morning the girl was nowhere to be found, and it was discovered that she had run away to the bush with a young man. The Mothe canoes had to return without the bride. The pair usually stay away until the anger of their relatives and especially of the young man's father has somewhat abated. At first they are berated in the village, but gossip soon dies away. When the pair return to the village they are accepted as man and wife. A wedding feast may or may not be held. 584 583

Marriages differ in size and importance according to the status of the inter-marrying clans. The marriage feasts and ceremonial gifts not only reflect but also determine the social status of the participating clans, who try to outdo each other in the quantity and splendor of their gifts. It is, however the young man's clan which in the long run contributes the larger quantity of food and property. The man's clan sets the date for the ceremonies, which are usually held in harvest season when food is readily available. 585 614 554

The marriage of a couple belonging to low ranking clans is a small affair, but that of a couple belonging to clans of high social standing involves the exchange of large amounts of property and the consumption of quantities of food. Preparations for the wedding feasts and ceremonies are begun months ahead by both the youth's and the girl's relatives. The work is shared by the men, who are responsible for the garden produce contributed by both sides for the marriage feasts, and by the women, who provide the barkcloth and mats for the affinal exchanges. An important wedding is discussed far and wide, and is attended by relatives from many villages and islands. The marriage of a high chief at Lakemba is a historic event, and a drain on the economic resources of the whole group. It is attended by representatives